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# COLAISTE NAISIUNTA EALAINE IS DEARTHA NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN FACULTY OF EDUCATION

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A Study of Transition Year (T.Y.) with respect to the School's Art Department utilising the opportunity to introduce Design, Theory, Practice and Appreciation.

A Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Education

in

Candidacy for the

DIPLOMA FOR ART AND DESIGN TEACHERS

by

Aisling Phelan

JUNE 1994

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UMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### INTRODUCTION

The only constant is change. The values we hold sacred today may be discarded tomorrow. In a changing world comes the changing needs of society. In all areas of life there is major restructuring of values, be they moral or economic. The same is true for education. If all around is changing then, so too, must our education.

For example, in the economic climate of the '60's and '70's, when there was less unemployment and more available money manufacturing companies made their business from offering "goods" for sale. They first manufactured a product and then sold it to the market. This approach was to prove flawed. During the lean times of the mid 80's - 90's companies still producing "product-orientated" goods were doomed to collapse. The wise business person learned that it was no longer simply a matter of saying - "I've got this to sell - you must buy it!". The producer must first see what the consumer wants and then try to make it. Thus "consumer orientated" marketing came to the fore.

If we transfer this idea to the way education is "sold" in our schools, we ask the question "who is the consumer?" Is it the person who pays i.e. society, parents etc. or is it the user

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In example, in the accounts climate of the 'so's and 'so

i.e. the pupils? I suggest that the consumer is society in general and its needs, though many and varied, are fundamentally for well rounded, socially and morally educated, creatively adaptable, competent individuals, who will form an integral part of the future society whether they are employed or not.

Unfortunately, for many years, the needs of society, (which includes the needs of the pupil), were not given much consideration in post-primary schools. Education in primary schools tends to be child centred where at post-primary level it tends to be subject orientated.

This opinion was quite explicitly referred to by the Minister for Education, John Wilson T.D. in June 1978 when he was setting up a committee to investigate the transfer of pupils from primary to post-primary schools.

The terms of reference read as follows:

To report on the problems of transition from childcentred primary to subject-centred post-primary schools and to make recommendations as to changes which may be necessary in primary and post-primary curricula in order to alleviate these problems. (1)

At present the education system is in a state of change. Improvements have already been made in the Junior Cycle. Senior Cycle is soon to go through the same process. It must be said that the reason why the post-primary sector appears slow to change is because the post-primary sector, in turn, is subject control and the meeds, though many and "stand, are suitasted tog relight dunded socially and gotally addrated, dreathed exhering competent individuals, who will form an interfect for but he inture society whether they are employed or not.

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A Transition Year offers pupils a broad educational experience with a view to the attainment of increased maturity, before proceeding to further study and/or vocational preparation. It provides a bridge to help pupils make the transition from a highly structured environment to one where they will take greater responsibility for their own learning and decisionmaking. (3)

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ecorrenents as well, such as the percessity to have studie

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As a teacher of Art, Craft and Design, with a specialisation in the Design field, I welcome the challenges and opportunities that accompany the Transition Year. The main challenge for the teacher is to comply with the Department of Educations' aspirations for Transition Year pupils. But there are also opportunities for both teacher and pupils to benefit from such an examination-free programme. In this dissertation I mean to present a simple approach to design education not provided for elsewhere in the school curriculum, which will not only cover the Transition Year requirements but could, and should, go beyond them.

Design education challenges the pupils' approach and method of thinking. Design is not only problem solving - but problem realisation. In order to solve the problem the pupil must first have a clear realisation and understanding of the nature of the problem and where it lies. For example, a bottle of milk spills onto the floor and someone yells "Quick, get a cloth". Another person returns with a wet cloth which cannot absorb the milk. Therefore the problem of the spilt milk remains unsolved because the real problem was not identified by the second person. The problem was not "find a cloth" it was "absorb the milk".

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Design education as a form of visual education should, I believe, be encouraged throughout the post-primary school cycle.

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1. Quoted in Department of Education, <u>Report of the Pupil</u> <u>Transfer Committee</u>, (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1981), p.1.

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- Donal G. Mulcahy, <u>Curriculum and Policy in Irish Post-Primary Education</u>, (Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, 1981), pp. 138 139.
- Department of Education, <u>Transition Year Programmes</u>: <u>Guidelines 1994 - 95</u>, (Dublin: Department of Education, 1993), p.3.

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Sonat 6. Mulcany, <u>Curpiculum and Policy in Litch Last</u> Cumary Education, (Dublin: Institute of Bujuth Cumaratetetion, 1931), pp. 133 139

npartment of Education, <u>Transition Year</u> Programmers uidelides 1994 - 95, (Dubliar Department of Educate

#### CHAPTER 1

#### THE BACKGROUND TO TRANSITION YEAR IN IRELAND

The on-going changes in our post-primary schools over the past two decades have done much to increase our educational options. At present 73% of young people complete senior cycle, a figure which the Department of Education hopes to increase to 90% by the year 2000. (1) The means and methods of achieving such a goal call for a clear review of the aims and direction of postprimary education.

From 1994, all pupils completing Junior Cycle will have the option of a three year Senior cycle. Thus 1994 heralds the introduction of the new six-year post-primary cycle, and is also the twentieth anniversary of the Transition Year Option (T.Y.O.). The Transition Year plays an integral part in this new three-year Senior Cycle. Along with the Vocational Preparation and Training Programme, Senior Certificate, Leaving Certificate and repeat Leaving Certificate, it forms part of the selective three year options open to Senior Cycle pupils.

Transition Year is a one year cycle immediately following Junior Certificate, after which pupils can continue on in mainstream education and complete the two years of Leaving Certificate or

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on-going changes in our post-primary schools over the be obscades have done much to increase our educational orthoubreagent /3% of young propie complete sandor evole a 1199 (1) the Department of Education hopes to increase to "") vest 2000. (1) The means and methods of achieving roch it call for a clear review of the sime and direction or co-

ressition Year 1a a one year rydle immediately colloring in a envideate, after which pupils can concide on in malasi envideate on in malasi environment complete the two years of Leav no write? the equivalent. According to the Department of Education the Transition Year -

.... is directed towards the intellectual, social and emotional maturation of the pupil. (2)

and listed as part of its course content are -

Social education, moral education, education for living (including homecrafts and education for parenthood, employment and leisure); philosophy and applied logic; music and arts; .... visual education; communication skills etc. (3)

This is completely different from mainstream examination orientated post-primary courses such as the Leaving Certificate course.

The aim and purpose of the Leaving Certificate course is to prepare pupils for immediate entry into open society or for proceeding to further education. The examination is mainly a test of achievement. (4)

Pupils who opt for Transition Year have a year free from examination pressures unlike their colleagues who continue in mainstream examination orientated courses. Those pupils in mainstream studies choose subjects with a view to third-level requirements (i.e. points). They are, therefore, not free to take on subjects which might be of interest to them. Transition Year pupils are in a position to take up more diverse subjects. is directed towards the intellectual, ac emotional maturition of the pupil. (2)

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Social equestion morel education education for inving (including homeorefts and oducation (c) parenthood employment and leisure); unilocopity and applied logic; music and arts; ... visual education communication skille ato (3)

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## The Background to Transition Year

The Transition Year was initiated on a pilot basis in 1974 by the then Minister for Education, Richard Burke, T.D.. The three schools which took part in the pilot scheme were - Garbally College, Ballinasloe; the Model Technical Institute, Limerick; and Holy Child Community School, Co. Dublin. (5)

Over the following two years the numbers of participating schools increased, so that by 1976/77 a total of sixteen schools were participating in the scheme. Schools had to apply to the Department of Education in order to seek approval and acceptance to participate in the Transition Year scheme. With the list of participating schools standing at sixteen the Department of Education decided that no further should be added. In 1977 an Evaluation Report was commissioned by the Department of Education to assess the effectiveness of the Transition Year The resulting report stated that ongoing study and courses. evaluation should be made of the Transition Year by both the Department of Education and by the Educational Research Centre Drumcondra (the body undertaking the evaluation report). The fact that this vital task was not carried out led to the diminution in the schools' enthusiasm to take on the Transition Year. It was not until 1984 - ten years after the initial

the Background to Trunsicion Yes

(i) Transition Year was initiated on a pilot basis in (1), the Transford Minister for Education, Richard Build, T.D., The chois which took pact in the pilot scheme were contract offere Salidasion the Hodel Vechtical lastitute, User of and Boly Child Community School, Co. Dubito. (5)

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In June 1984, Gemma Hussey, T.D., the Minister for Education listed Transition Year as one of a number of options for schools wishing to offer a six year post-primary cycle. 140 schools approximately were already offering a six year cycle by providing a four year Junior Cycle. Other schools, no more than twenty or so, were offering a seven year cycle. The majority, however, were simply providing a five year Senior Cycle. (6) These schools were experiencing falling numbers of pupils, due to both a falling birth rate and to the fact that parents were opting to place children into a six year cycle post-primary school where possible. (7) The 1984 initiative opened the way for schools to prolong their current post-primary cycle, and to close the discrepancy between schools. The options made available to schools then were -

- \* Transition Year
- \* Vocational Preparation and Training Programme
- \* Repeat Leaving Certificate Course

The major difference between the 1974 and the 1984 initiatives was the fact that courses would be monitored and controlled by the Department of Education.

1 the 1984, Semma Hussey T.D., the Minister for Education spaced Transition Late as one of a number of options for sentenentries that year post-brimary cycle. Moneton on origing a four year Junior Cycle. Other schools, no more than a four year Junior Cycle. Other schools, no more than a four year Junior Cycle. Other schools, no more than a schools were schoring a seven van cycle. The majo there a schools were schoring a seven van cycle. The majo there a schools were schoring a seven van cycle. The majo there a schools were schoring a seven van cycle. The paralo there a schools were experiencing failing nothers of politic school were possible. (A) The 1984 initiative opened school to prolong their current post-primary cycle, a school to prolong their current post-primary cycle, a schools to prolong their current post-primary cycle, a schools to prolong their current post-primary cycle, a schools the discrepancy between schools. The option, and the schools the vere

> Transition Yeat Vocational Preparation and Training Proofs Repeat Leaving Certificate Course

a magor difference between the 1974 and the 1989 into a second the fact that courses would be sonifored and controls use a Gepartment of Education.

Although proposed in 1984 schools could not provide Transition Year until 1986/87. Schools, particularly those on a five year cycle, were keen to be accepted for Transition Year by the Department of Education in order to retain pupil numbers. Even schools previously on the Transition Year scheme had to re-apply. In all, 95 schools were accepted.

Transition Year was proving so popular that schools who were not on the scheme were losing pupils to schools that were. In 1988 the Department of Education notified all schools stating that only pupils who had participated in the Junior Cycle in a school could participate in the Transition Year of that school. (8)

The Department of Education was aware that school guidelines were necessary, so the Minister for Education asked the Curriculum and Examinations Board (C.E.B.) to produce a handbook on the topic. In 1986 the C.E.B. produced <u>Planning, Introducing</u> <u>and Developing Transition Year Programmes:Guidelines for Schools</u> (9) which gave details of the aims and aspirations of Transition Year as well as information on a practical approach for teachers.

Transition year programmes should be consciously designed to act as a bridge for students to move from a state of dependence to a more autonomous and participative role with regard to their own future. (10)

The Curriculum and Examinations Board <u>Planning, Introducing and</u> Developing Transition Year Programmes: Guidelines for Schools

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advised a tightly structured curriculum. The year should be one of educational enrichment going beyond the boundaries of examination orientated learning. The year was to be free from mainstream examination pressures. However, in practice, some schools used the year to cater for the weaker pupils in a three year Leaving Certificate course but this was not supported by the Department of Education who stated that no more than 40% of the week was to be given to mainstream Leaving Certificate studies. (11)

The C.E.B.'s <u>Planning</u>, <u>Introducing and Developing Transition</u> <u>Year Programmes:Guidelines for Schools</u> lays out a rationale for Transition Year, and states that the course -

should aim to provide pupils with the skills and support necessary to -

discover their own individual talents, aptitudes and abilities with regard to future educational and/or vocational participation.... (12)

The C.E.B.'S <u>Planning</u>, <u>Introducing and Developing Transition</u> <u>Year Programmes:Guidelines for Schools</u> emphasised the opportunity available to educate pupils in the arts and to include a wide range of creative activity. The publication proved invaluable in terms of giving concrete direction to the schools.

should aim to provide supils with the saills and support necessary to

alicover their own innivitater teletter educational abilities with regard to future educational vocational participation ... (13)

6.8.6.5 Planning, Introducing and Daveloring Firm Programmed:Guidelines for Schola explanity out unity available to educate pupils in cace the close a wide range of creative activity. The Pt. Sted faveluable an terms of giving concrete div. of the Sted faveluable an terms of giving concrete div. of the Pt. While these methods were assisting the workings of the schools, the parents were becoming concerned about the longterm benefits for their children. Many parents opted to keep their children in mainstream education and preferred the two year Leaving Certificate course followed, if needs be, by the one year repeat Leaving Certificate course. Parents were afraid that Transition Year was a wasted year where pupils lost the discipline and habit of study. Principals of schools offering Transition Year were feeling pressurised by parents to replace Transition Year with repeat Leaving Certificate courses. In order to justify the Transition Year, some schools turned to "formalising" the year by offering pupils certificates of participation. An added concern of parents was the financial cost of the year, what with field trips and tours home and abroad etc. Unlike the Vocational Preparation and Training Programme, Transition Year was not covered under any E.U. scheme.

By 1989 the numbers of schools participating in the Transition Year scheme had dropped from 95 to 66. The onus was on the schools to open communications between teachers, pupils and parents so that all parties had an active role in the structuring of the schools Transition Year curriculum, and in so doing, parents became reassured as to the value of the year.

The name methods are assubblication for working at the lingland hand in the name of the second concerned about the lingland hand is a rematrican education and preferred the two year is arriitance course followed, if needs be, by the one year is arriitance course followed, if needs be, by the one year is about of settificate course formate were arread the duscipility and a wasted year where pupile lost the duscipility which of study. Principals of schools offering frame sources which is a past is and schools offering frame sources about of setting pressures d by parameter to the duscipility and the pressures by parameter of the dust of the setting pressures by parameter to the dust of the setting pressures of schools offering frame sources are of offering pupils certificate courses. In order to the setting pupils certificates of participation, an afficoursen of parameters are the lines of schools of the year, desited trips and tours have and abroad etc. Units and the paration and fraining produces of the year, desited trips and tours have and abroad etc. Units and to verse and fraining produces are dusted as the set of the setting of the set o

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### Transition Year as it is Today

In the ASTI's publication <u>The Transition Year</u> it states that in 1993/94, 160 schools from all over Ireland participated in Transition Year, (13) and that the rationale remains the same.

to facilitate the integrated development of the intellectual, emotional, spiritual, physical, social and vocational capacities of each individual student through a structured learning experience. (14)

Each school plans its own Transition Year curriculum based on its staff and resources. Basic literacy, numeracy and oracy continue and develop in ways not accessible to the mainstream Leaving Certificate pupils. For example, Leaving Certificate pupils studying academic subjects such as English, Irish, Mathematics, Science or History etc., are restricted in their studies by the Department of Educations course syllabus. The Leaving Certificate course is examination orientated and so both teachers and pupils are not encouraged to digress from the specified syllabus, whereas, Transition Year pupils study without such restrictions. Therefore, Modern Languages can be experienced by the pupils through cinema, music and television, and Commerce through the formation of mini-companies, public speaking, debates, quizzes, dramas, computers and leisure programmes are among the many options open to Transition Year pupils. Work experience, whether real or simulated, is also emphasised as an important aspect of Transition Year.

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The AST's publication the Transition Year of Scene the

to facilitate the integrated development of the intellectual, emotional, spiritual physical doc and vocational capacities of each individual atudant through a structured learning experience. (14)-

(c) .school plana its own Transition ton structure part actificant resources. Samiol forcer dimensor and continue and develop in vara not accessible to the main ton beaving Certificate pupils. For example, heaving (etf the derias coudying academic antrocas such as Saglass contacts, Science or Henory etc., are restricted in contacted by the Department of Educations course evilation contacts and pupils are not encouraged for districted in the struct of aritable for examption oftenders and e contacted by the partment of Educations oftenders and e contacted by the partment of Educations for districted in the structed of the pupils are not encouraged for distruction in contacted by the pupils are not formation for districted in contacted by the pupils are not encouraged for distruction in contacted by the pupils distributed for an and the contacted by the pupils distributed for an and the contacted by the pupils distributed for an and the contacted by the pupils distributed for an and the contacted by the pupils distributed for the struct and debated contactes distributed for an and the structure of the structure of the structure of the structure are and the tormation of the structure of a structure of the structure o The Department of Education lays out guidelines for planning the Transition Year curriculum. It issues a handbook to schools <u>Transition Year Programmes: Guidelines 1994-'95</u>. The previously mentioned ASTI's publication <u>The Transition Year</u>, is also a valuable resource for schools. The information in the 1986 C.E.B. <u>Planning, Introducing and Developing Transition Year</u> <u>Programmes:Guidelines for Schools</u> still serves to cater for todays needs.

Under the ASTI's guidelines in <u>The Transition Year</u> the Transition Year curriculum should be based on the following headings:-

*	Communications	studies
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- Functional Mathematics
- \* Environmental studies
- \* Practical subjects
- \* Aesthetics

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- \* Physical Education
- \* Education for living
- \* Religion (15)

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Communications atudies Eunctional Mathematics anvironmental atudies Practical subjects Associatics Ebysical Education Education for living Religion 151 The Role of The School's Art Department in Transition Year

The aforementioned list of possible areas or topics of curriculum studies requires linkages and co-operation from teachers of different disciplines. For example, Environmental Studies could bring in the study of local history, of arts and crafts and of natural sciences all of which could be brought into the artroom. There is no specific instruction or guidelines issued from the Department of Education regarding the role of the school art department. However it is suggested under the heading "Practical Studies" -

Appreciation of simple design and the wider everyday life aspects of technology, applied science and arts subjects such as engineering, construction studies, technical graphics, home economics, agricultural science, art and must are invaluable in interdisciplinery contexts such as mini-companies and other project-related activities. (16)

Possible activities listed under this heading are -

- Furniture-making and restoration; interior design and furnishings
- Various crafts such as model-making, jewellery-making, pottery.
- Textile crafts such as soft toys, weaving, fabric printing, etc. (17)

Practical subjects and Aesthetics are obvious aspects to be considered for artroom related studies. Less obvious might be

the Role of The School's Art Department in Trustia

The atorementioned list of possible areas of topics of our routum studies requires linkages and co-operation tracters of different disciplinas. For example Environmental sects could bring in the study of local history, of the sects and of detural sciences all of which could be accuge into the artform. Thate is no specific instruction in selices issued from the Department of Education regards of one of the school art department. However it is sugards of

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one activities listed under this heading are

Furniture-making and restoretion/ interior design

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the study of Information Technology, which according to <u>Transition Year Programmes - Guidelines 1994 - 1995</u> issued by the Department, should explore activities involving:-

- Word-processing, spreadsheets, and data bases;
- Computer graphics and computer-aided design (CAD);
- Computer-aided manufacture (CAM) and computer control;
- Communications links and systems. (18)

The Department of Education gives guidelines to possible areas of study, it is then up to the individual school to propose and have sanctioned, their own school Transition Year curriculum. Each school will make use of their available resources: therefore the role of the art department within Transition Year will vary from school to school.

In order to present an overview of how Transition Year programmes are delivered and of the wide range of courses available, the following chapter cites a particular school's approach in the form of a case study. Bagittion Yoar Programmen - Guidelings 1994 - 1995 128 ed
Department, anodid explore activities involving:
Word-processing, spreadaneets, 2nd data bases;
Computer graphics and computer-aided design (CAL);
Computer-aided manufacture (CAN) and computer e.o.!;

the Department of Education gives guidelines to gossible and the sentioned, it is then up to the individual achool to propose we sanctioned, their own school Transition Year entries the school will make use of their available resolutherefore the role of the art department within Transition is vary from school to achool. It must be present an overview of how Transition for ogrammes are delivered and of the wide raise of the total to be delivered and of the wide raise of the total context of the set of the wide raise of the total context of the set of the wide raise of the total total to the the following chapter fites a particular with the fite of the total total total total total to the set of the set of

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# CHAPTER 2 C.B.C. MONKSTOWN PARK

## Transition Year Case Study

Christian Brothers College, Monkstown, Co. Dublin was officially opened on September 29th, 1954. (1) It was originally run by the Christian Brothers themselves but on the 1st August 1986 it changed over to the Board of Management structure. Mr. Patrick Keating was appointed as the first lay principal of C.B.C. Monkstown in 1986.

In Mr. Keating's earliest statements as Principal he declares that his primary objective -

is to ensure that every boy in the school is given credit for his talents and encouraged to develop them. (2)

he goes on to say that -

It means encouragement of social skills, selfexpression and communication. These will develop from the sense of self-worth of each boy. Thus not only academic but also those with other talents will be given recognition. Such education transcends the old examination-based curriculum. In this context I am pleased to see the introduction of a Transition Year in 1986 - 1987. (3)

## Transition Yes: Case Study

contaction Brothers College, Monkstown, Co. Dublin was of the life opened on September 29th, 1954. (1) It was originally (name) and Christian Brothers themselves but on the let August 1965 changed over to the Board of Management structure. Mr. Path Resting was appointed as the first lay principal of C.9 but stown to 1986.

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In 1989 the Principal, Mr. Keating, praised the Transition Year in the school's annual -

Transition Year continued its very hard work under the direction of Mr. Fox. An innovation this year was participation in the European Environmental Project in conjunction with the Co-Operation North Project. (4)

The Transition Year had proved itself to be both popular and successful. The pupils themselves enjoyed the challenge the year offered, as is obvious from the following extracts from reports written by Transition Year pupils.

Twenty-four lucky boys got their places in the most envied class in the school. The first day was a quick one. There was little to do but talk about the Summer antics that we had gotten (sic) up to. Suddenly Mr. Fox bounced into the class, sniffed once or thrice and welcomed us. That was the start of what for most of us was to be a great adventure.... Soon the chosen few were to find that Transition Year, at the easiest of times, was no bed of roses. (5)

In May '89, if some Transition Year graduate took a general consensus on the attitude of third years towards Transition Year, he would have found out that it was said to be a 'waste of a year' and 'a doss'. Deep down, I suppose, most Transition Year candidates agreed with this, but this was not to be ..... (6)

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One of the first tasks of the Co-ordinator will be the recruitment of a support group to assist in planning and delivering the Transition Year programme. This group will identify the aims and expectations of the Transition Year programme in their school and will develop a programme accordingly. This policy-making take account of the school ethos, process will expectations, geographical location, parental educational needs of the students, their economic and social background, and the resources of the school. (7)

Each year, in February, the school must submit to the Department of Education, the proposed curriculum for the Transition Year commencing the following September. In March, after a parentteacher meeting on the subject, the third years submit written applications requesting acceptance into Transition Year. It is

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C.B.C. Monkstown has kept to a similar curriculum from year to year. Subjects such as English, Irish, French, Mathematics, Religion, Science and Business Studies are continued throughout the year. While subjects such as Music, Drama, Arts and Crafts, Cookery and Technology (which comprises technical drawing and woodwork) are experienced by some pupils for the first time. Social Studies is followed up by a weeks social work in either an Old Folk's Centre in Dun Laoghaire or in Dunmore House, Glenageary, a centre for the mentally handicapped. This activity proves to be very rewarding to the pupil. As one Transition Year pupil stated in regard to Dunmore House -

It was an enlightening and humbling experience watching those children, unable to care for themselves having to rely constantly on outside assistance. Some were deformed or disfigured, they were wheeled in in wheelchairs, making unbearable and indistinguishable sounds, and I found them very hard to look at.... The three days really opened up my life. Without them I would still have prejudices about the mentally handicapped. (8)

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There are two two-week blocks of work experience timetabled into the year. The first block is in the first term and the second block is in the last term. The Transition Year co-ordinator organises one of the 'jobs' for each pupil, but the pupils themselves must find the other. Pupils have found themselves in banks, shops, offices, garden centres, hotels, restaurants, veterinary clinics and television studios, to mention a few places.

Other features of the year are theatre trips, debating nights, trips to Northern Ireland (under Co-Operation North) and charitable work such as a skipathon as fund-raising for the Irish Heart Foundation. (9)

The event, in which Transition Year participate, which has the greatest impact on the entire school is the Annual Musical show. "The Mikado", "Fiddler on the Roof" and "Guys and Dolls" are some of the musicals performed in conjunction with the Transition Year in Loreto Convent, Foxrock. The eagerness to take part in the musical is such that third years try to discover the next musical and learn the songs in advance in the

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• event. In which Transition Year participate, which has all reatest incact on the entire school is the Annual Misical and the sikado", "Fiddlet on the Roof" and "Guve and Doll" and are of the musicale performed in compunction with scattion Year in Loreto Contest. Fourack. The second the part in the musical is such that third years for scatter the next musical and learn the songs in advince of the next musical and learn the songs in advince. hope that, should they be accepted into Transition Year, they could audition for a part!

The Transition Year co-ordinator organises the musical with the assistance of members from the support group. The chief assistant is the art teacher.

The musical places a heavy burden on the school art department. Backdrops, stage sets, props, costumes, make-up, posters and programmes etc. all fall onto the responsibility of the art teacher. The musical usually opens mid-November which means that the entire show is put together in two months. During this time full-time lessons are still being run and the art teacher still has a full timetable to attend to.

Transition Year occupies a generous portion of the art teacher's timetable, being allocated two triple-classes of 120 minutes, whereas all the other years only receive single classes of 40 minutes.

The art teacher makes himself available to accompany the Transition Year on cultural trips and on various outings which take place throughout the year. His role is to develop the pupils aesthetic appreciation and to increase their awareness of the visual world around them as they experience it. This

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Transition Year co-ordinator proantage the musical site and a standard of an and the standard of the standard

The musical places a beavy burded on the school art department, there is stage sets, proper costumes, male up, posters, an originammes etc. all fall onto the responsibility of fae art that the entire show is put fogether in two months. During the in cull-time lessons are still being run and the art toolers will has a tell timetable to strend to.

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a re tracher makes limpelf available to accompany in againon Year on cultural trips and on various outings kind a place throughout the years Ris cole is to develop it ris aesthetic appreciation and to increase their avarant it count would around them as they experience. deserves every support and is in keeping with the Curriculum and Examinations Board 1986 recommendation that -

Schools must develop the creative and aesthetic experience of the arts in students not only to help their own personal development and enrichment but also to enrich the quality of life generally. The particular contribution of certain aspects of the arts, notably design, to economic prosperity should also be noted. (10)

This recommendation was not aimed specifically at Transition Year. It was one of many listed aims of education put forward in the 1986 report of the interim Curriculum and Examinations Board to the Minister of Education in the publication <u>In Our</u> <u>Schools: a Framework for Curriculum and Assessment. (11)</u> While much of this recommendation has been compiled with throughout the schools curriculum and in particular with regard to Transition Year, the reference to design education has not been addressed at all.

As part of my involvement in the 1993/94 Transition Year in C.B.C. Monkstown, I seized the opportunity to develop the pupils' awareness and appreciation of design, and to encourage them to design and make products for themselves.

I shall expand on and present my approach to design education in the next chapter.

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#### CHAPTER 3

## TRANSITION YEAR CLASS 1993 - 94 AND THEIR WORK IN THE SCHOOL ARTROOM

We are hardly likely to do well as a nation if our ablest members are not helped to become doers and makers, organizers and problem solvers. (1)

Thus wrote Peter Gorb, Senior Fellow in Design Management, London Business School. His concern lay with the fact that the education system was seen to be based on the attainment of quantity of knowledge but not quality of knowledge. Peter Gorb is a member, and onetime chairman, of the Education for Capability committee and also a signatory to the Education for Capability campaign launched by the Royal Society of Arts in 1986. (2) The committee's manifesto states -

A well balanced education should, of course, embrace analysis and acquisition of knowledge. But it must also include the exercise of creative skills, the competence to undertake and complete tasks and the ability to cope with everyday life; and also doing all these things in co-operation with others. (3)

I quote these references as support to my view that design education should be an important and valid part of every pupil's visual education. At present, much of post-primary education, senior cycle in particular, is (as I referred to in Chapter 1) examination-based. This is to say that priority is given to

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## TEANSITION YEAR CLASS 1993 - 94 AND THEIR WORK IN THE SCHOOL ANTROOM

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mode these references as support to my view that is called should be an important and valid part of every low ral education. At present, much of postspilmary advise iter cycle in particular, is (as I referred to ). (by "s quantity of knowledge covered and not to an ability to apply that knowledge. Design, I like to think, is applied Art, and is just one reason why design should receive greater attention within the post-primary school cycle.

My views are by no means new or unsupported. The Curriculum and Examinations Board in 1985 listed in their recommendations regarding The Arts in Education -

Existing visual arts syllabuses should be reviewed and design and design-related skills should be given greater emphasis in such revision. (4)

This opinion was similarly reiterated in 1987 in the C.E.B.'s <u>Report of the Board of Studies: The Arts</u> with reference to the general aims for visual arts -

To engage pupils in the creation of problems which must be perceived and solved and which are inherently ambiguous and have no single correct solution. (5)

The Report goes on to state that the aims regarding visual arts at post-primary level -

Through active involvement, to further the understanding and appreciation of design in all its forms. (6)

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he reacht goed on to state that the sine regarding y. t rost primary level -

//brough active involvement, to further, se //cderstanding and appreciation of design in all the forms. (6) Yet design education is given little attention within the postprimary school cycle. The provision made for design within the Leaving Certificate course falls very far short of the recommendations made by the C.E.B. Design is grouped with craftwork and the pupil selects one or the other. This choice can mean that teachers may neglect design in favour of craftwork.

David Thistlewood sums up the importance of design when he says-

In a very real sense designing is not just an indispensable human faculty: it is the co-ordination and efficient marshalling of all branches of knowledge. (7)

John Fullerton offers a definition for design in his writings on the subject. He suggests that:-

It depends upon an ability to see existing circumstances analytically and to envisage the possibility of changing them. It extends into an ability to rehearse alternatives in the mind, and later to select and take appropriate action. (8)

This definition most appeals to me. It brings to mind a visual memory of a cartoon: a cartoon character walks down a street, he comes across a pile of junk, in various shapes and forms. A thought bubble appears above his head and it contains the pile of junk he sees. The man manipulates, within the thought bubble, the bits and pieces of junk into various combinations and permutations until a satisfactory, practical result is acquired. He then assembles the actual pieces into his design - a car!

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in a very real seare designing is not just insispensable human faculty: it is the co-ordinatic and efficient marshalling of all branches o knowledge. (7)

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This does not mean to say that design education is beyond the scope of post-primary pupils. Every day they make design decisions, based on problem solving methods, without realising it. They place books upright on shelves for ease of access and they position furniture in their rooms in a way that appears efficient and aesthetic to them.

To design is always to prescribe some form, structure, pattern or arrangement for a proposed thing, system or event. (19)

Design, as a form of visual education, could find no better participants than those pupils in Transition Year, because Transition Year is all about discovering new ways of seeing and learning, that would develop and enrich the pupils understanding of themselves and the world around them. Design is all around them - it shapes the world they live in now and in the future.

## C.B.C. Monkstown Park: Transition Year 93/94

A class of twenty-three Transition Year pupils were timetabled with me for a triple class of Art. Only eight out of the twenty-three had taken art in the Junior Certificate. But this was not to say that the rest lacked ability. Previous a signing and controlling of the world around us

his does not nean to say that design souchtion is here a taba of post-primary pupils. Every day they make design (hims, based on problem solving methods, without rail is they place books upright on shelves for ease of accession rey position furniture in their rooms is have the souch (filteent and easthefic to them.

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Lass of twenty-three Transition Year pupils ware the

experience is no judge of ability and aptitude. The tight scheduling of the Transition Year timetable would mean that classes would be missed every now and then to allow for social work, field trips and work experience. My design projects needed to be basic and practical but also challenging and interesting if it was to compete with timetable disruptions. My longterm aim for the pupils would not so much be the production of a finished piece, but rather that they would gain and develop an understanding, appreciation and knowledge of the design process itself.

I based my lesson plans on team work, (teams of four to five pupils), for a number of reasons. Firstly, I consider team work to be invaluable in design decision making. Pupils bounce ideas and suggestions off each other more readily than they might to a teacher on an individual basis. Secondly - team work encourages a policy of pooling resources, and as often design requires interdisciplinary skills, the pupils who may be weak at art but good at science etc. can contribute and feel just as much a part of the project as others. Thirdly, it encourages competition among teams and thus keeps the incentive and interest up. This also helps class discipline.

And lastly, as Transition Year is based on working in an adult environment and with getting on with and getting to know others,

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chaoulus of the francition fear cindtable would mean the classes would be missed every now and then to click for soror, field trips and work experience. My design proves the feat to be basic and practical but also challenging and meaning if it was to compete with timetable disruptions in a carter and for the pupile would not so much be the producted of finished piece, but father that they would gain and due to undorstanding, appreciation and knowledge of the design increase itself.

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ud lastly, na Transition Year is based on working is at add

team work is a must. With regard to design and team work, Tom Hudson says that -

Many developments with materials can be better carried out by working in groups than by means of the kind of isolated activity traditionally (though not necessarily productively) associated with the artist. The majority of people ultimately work in group organisations, yet in both general and specialist education little work has been devoted to this phenomenon. (10)

I was to have one group of Transition Year pupils up until Christmas and a new group of 23 Transition Year pupils from February onwards. This meant that I had to plan out two projects and had the opportunity to see how two groups of pupils would work through these projects. What I would learn from my initial project I could use in my second one. My second project would, therefore, become my major project within the artroom, from which I shall make my evaluations, conclusions and suggestions regarding design education in the artroom.

### Preliminary Project

My initial design project carried out in the first term with Transition Year proved valuable in deciding on the sequence of lessons for what would be the Transition Year's main project within the artroom.

Through this initial sequence of lessons I wanted to -

Many developments with materials can be better called out by working in orotpe that by means of the site of isolated activity tradifionally (though net accessify productively) associated with the artise. The majority of people pltimately work in aroup organisations, yet in both general and specially succation little work has been dovoted to inte phenomence. (10)

## Proliminery Project

My initial design protect carried out in the line way we want to the line way and the intervente of the second be wanted in detiction on the way and the intervente of the second for what would be the Transition Year's main which we show the artroom.

- (a) Discover the individual's drawing abilities and their understanding of the basic art elements.
- (b) To discover the pupils' possible inhibitions towards drawing or art in general.
- (c) To discover the pupils' ability to make decisions for themselves but in consideration and co-operation with other team members.
- (d) To discover the pupils' ability to understand a design project and to follow initial concepts to finished prototypes.

The brief was to design a free-standing lampshade based on natural forms.

Six of their lampshades, constructed out of wire and tissuepaper were brought to prototype stage.

My most important and relevant discovery was the pupils' preference to work in three-dimensions rather than twodimensions. The pupils had great inhibitions about drawing from both observation and imagination, even though many of the socalled "non-experienced" pupils were as capable as others. They simply felt that they could not draw. The three-dimensional work with wire was much more appealing to all as it was a new material for everyone and, therefore, nobody felt disadvantaged. Drawing skills and interest levels increased dramatically when no eratamong of the basic art elements. To discover the pupils' possible inhibitions town drawing of art in general.

o discover the pupits anility to make decretation the bemselves but in consideration and co-operation with oth eam members. o discover the pupits' ability to drderstand a hesu

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the pupils were asked to draw their own finished prototypes. I found that pupils enjoyed working for a "reason", by that I mean that they worked better if it was either in their own interest or if the work related to them personally. An example of this would be their swing-tag designs for their lamps which they produced. They got quite involved with cutting and stencilling their swing-tags because it was for an actual product which they, themselves, had produced.

Through the course of this initial project I covered many of the basic art elements in a way that was understandable for those without previous art experience and also interesting enough to appeal and challenge those with Junior Certificate level art.

The first class in the lesson sequence was observational drawing of shells and vegetables in line only. I explained that they were not attempting to produce a 'pretty' picture but rather they were to discover as much about their object as possible. They should draw it from all sides, paying attention to proportion, pattern, and size. They could write notes to describe any detail they thought necessary - so that by the end of class they knew everything they could about their object. If it was a vegetable, they could cut it in half, and if it was a shell they could enlarge a detail study. This method of observational drawing meant that those who felt inexperienced in drawing would use notes to fill in where their skills failed

the costa which which to the their own intreased which the read that pupils entroyed working for a "reason", by the limit that they worked better if it was either in thair own down or if the work related to them personally. An example of this sinc is their dwing tag designs for their tamps which more condiced. They got write involved with cutting and scence, how there awing tags because it was for an actual product with the character, had produced.

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List claus in the lasson sequence was observations and a static and vertables in line only. I explained that the second s

them, and those experienced would view this "still life" study in a new light.

The second lesson followed the same theme, where the pupils took their 2D line work studies into 3D by using wire. The wire constructions were all about hand-held size, no bigger than 20cm in height or width, the wire medium was new to everyone and proved a good leveller of skills, so that nobody was either advantaged or disadvantaged.

In the third lesson I returned to 2D again, getting the class to draw their 3D wire constructions and then to cut them out. I then gave the pupils a variety of scenes, both interior and exterior, all torn from magazines and the pupils pasted their cut-outs onto these scenes. The result was that their constructions took on new meaning. In landscape scenes they looked like giant sculptures and in interiors they resembled hats, sculptures and lamps!

For the following three lessons the class worked in teams of four on a brief to design a lamp based on their research and study of natural forms. They worked to actual size and created finished prototypes out of wire and tissue paper. Then, on lesson six, the pupils did tonal drawings of their prototypes, and finally they worked on designing swing-tags to go with their prototype. These were produced by cutting card to make a

The second lenson followed the same thame, where the pupil. Solve that 2D line work studies into 3D by using wire. The wire cohetructions were All about hand-held size. Bo bigget that 20 wire in the wire medium was now to everyone and roved a good leveller of skills, so thet nobody was entries of antaoed or disadvantaged.

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A set following three lessons the class worked in feare of our on a brief to design a lamp based on their pease of study of natural forms. They worked to attus size and class? Initabed prototypes out of wire and tissle paper. That is isseen six, the pupils did tonal drawing to a their prototypes of classic they worked on designing swing tags to a subschere. stencil and sponging the paint on. Unfortunately, due to Transition Years' busy timetable and schedule, I did not have them as often as I should and they never got to finish the project in its' entirety. Having said that, I was very pleased with their results and felt that they had gained more than a finished piece of work - they had participated in a design process. (Details of class sequence and examples of pupils' work are illustrated at the end of this dissertation).

Aided by these findings I developed the Transition Years' second and more challenging sequence of lessons.

# The Second Sequence of Lessons

It was not until late January that the second group of twentythree Transition Year pupils had their first lesson with me. This term was to prove to be even more disrupted than the previous term in regard to the continuity of classes from week to week, as the pupils were yet to go on work experience and social work. There was also the matter of the schools' participation in the Junior and Senior Cup Rugby tournament. This would mean that there would be a half-day for any matches involving Christian Brothers College.

conditions according the faint on "aforturate in the active Years' busy timetable and schedule, 1 million of the chem as often as I should and they never got to cipital the correct in its' agtirety. Naving said that. I was very these with their results and fait that they had gained more from rintabled piece of work - they had participated in a deep crocess. (Details of class sequence and scatples of pupils of the disconcent the end of this disseriation).

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For my initial class in the sequence, I used the artroom stool as my source. I asked the pupils to do a simple line drawing of it. I then asked the pupils for the primary function of the They had no problem in responding that the primary stool. function was to sit on it. When asked what features made this possible they were neither slow nor shy to list the structural features which made the stool capable of taking the weight of a body. I went on to ask for the secondary functions of the stool and I expanded this by asking them what else do they use these stools for, the pupils noticed stools with books, bags and jackets on them and decided that these stools could also be used as tables, or to stand on etc. I pushed the matter further asking for tertiary functions. I explained, giving examples, the primary, secondary and tertiary functions of a pen. The pupils had to write a list of primary, secondary and tertiary functions relating to the artroom stool - illustrating ideas where possible. The pupils showed great creativity of thought while still relating their ideas to the features of the stool.

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This lead on to their second class which again was heavily weighted with analysis, creative thinking and decision making. Due to the fact that this was a two hour long lesson, I broke the class into three sections with a mini-evaluation after each task. The first task was to do an analysis of the artroom stool. This time I introduced what is known as the S.W.O.T. analysis method, this method is used in marketing and involves looking at an object in terms of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. I wanted to give pupils a sense of design reality and so I decided to use design and marketing terminology, making sure that I explained the terms fully. The pupils had little problem understanding the terms and appeared to enjoy the use of "jargon".

The second task was worked in teams of four pupils, and each team was given a chart featuring fourteen chairs, cut out from magazines. The pupils were handed a worksheet to fill up. The teams had to analyse the chairs and rate them from one to five under various headings (e.g. comfort, body support, aesthetic value etc.). The teams also had to decide where they would envisage the chairs being used (i.e. domestic use, dining room, business etc.).

Due to the fact that the pupils were working in teams, debates arose as to why one chair should rate higher or lower than

ale ted with analysis, creative thinking and decision as Markow to the fact that this was a two hour tone leants is bucked and the fact that this was to do an analysis of the artes of the artes tool. This that has noticed with a mini-evaluation after and tool. This that is actually as to do an analysis of the artes of the artes of the artes are tool. This that is actually a to do an analysis of the artes of the artes of the artes are tool. This that the actual terms of Strengths Washed to the artes of the artes of the artes are to a point of the artes of the artes of the artes are to be artes of the artes of

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us to the fact that the public were working in the

another. The pupils were actively involved in discussions on functional design features.

The final task of the lesson was to add yet another 'technical' term to their design vocabulary: ergonomics. I asked the question how did they judge the comfort or body support value of a chair since they could not actually sit on it? what features were they looking for? and how did they relate to the human body? A lifesize outline of a pupil was made and areas of relevance and importance were highlighted (e.g. distance from hip to knee and knee to foot etc.).

This lesson went extremely successfully despite the fact that it was a long class without the production of any practical work in terms of drawings or models etc. The pupils were extremely attentive and responsive to all tasks set.

The third lesson gave the pupils an opportunity to deal with a working design brief. The pupils were divided into their teams of four pupils and each team had a different theme and function which were as follows:-

### THEME

#### FUNCTION

A POP GROUP,	design	a	chair	for	a	Pop Video
NATURE,	"	"	"	"	"	Park
ENVIRONMENT,	"	"	"	"	"	Student's Flat

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# THEME

A POP GROUP design a chair for a Pop and A NATURE, Park

THE CITY, design a chair for a Office Reception FUTURISTIC, " " " " " T.V. Chat Show

My original plan was to have the prototypes worked to actual size for which I had collected large amounts of tin cans, wood, wire and cardboard boxes. I had advised the art teacher, over Christmas, about my intentions but I was only informed before my third lesson that I would have to keep all models to a small scale. The restriction imposed was due to the lack of storage space within the artroom and the fact that I would not be granted other storage areas.

Despite this set back, the project continued. The teams had to write out and draw the features they thought necessary to meet the particular requirements of their brief. They drew and made scale models, using wire and tape to build the basic structure and form in three dimensions.

During the evaluation, I got the pupils to question each others work, not in terms of whether it was good or bad, but whether or not it worked and did or did not relate to the given brief. I did not want pupils to feel that they had no part in the decision making process - in fact, I wanted them to take full control. So long as the design met the requirements of the brief they were free to be as creative as they wished. The pupils then selected one chair design per team.

Ag ornainal bian was to have the prototypes worked book of a one for which I had collected large anotats of the cars. The and carlboard poxes I had advised the art tasche Conternas, about ny intentions but a was only informed ferce inited lesson that I would have to keep all models to a sumple scale. The restriction imposed was due to the lack of store cause within the artron and the ract that I would not be specied other storage areas

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The pupils shied away from drawing large designs, instead, despite my advice, many opted to draw tiny versions of their designs. Measurements were basic, some indicating no more than height and width. Those pupils with previous art experience, drew more confidently and were more aware of the fact that the drawing of the model required measurements from various aspects (e.g. seat to top of arm rest etc.) if it was to be of any use in the construction of the prototype.

During the second half of the class I showed the pupils slides of chairs dating from the early 1930's to the 1990's. We discussed some of the unusual features of the chairs. The class pointed out that some of the chairs looked like abstract sculpture, I agreed and reinforced the importance of scale it was the scale and proportion that made the difference between some chairs being functional or not. The class was very aware

If the actuations and to work out a scaled prototype. In order constructions and to work out a scaled prototype. In order to this, they had tirgt to consider the proportions of the shall to the pody. This drawing became their working these to it instron blue print of sorts. I would the public to see by it pointent it was to adept, scale, proportion and simplify their sports they would tackle a three-dimensional formet.

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The rest of the lesson time was given to the teams to construct the framework of their prototypes from coat hanger wire, cardboard tubing, boxes and tape. This activity continued into the following two lessons, when the form was built up using papier-mache and card. Pupils began to bring in their own materials to use, such as tin cans, leaves and sticks. Many pupils abandoned their original prototype of coat-hanger wire and commenced working in their own chosen materials. This gave me a good indication as to their understanding of structure and form. The pupils were looking at their two dimensional drawings, visualising it in three dimensions and solving the problem of transforming two dimensions into three dimensions by careful decision making of required materials. This is not to say, that those pupils who continued, regardless of original design, to use the wire and papier-mache had failed to get involved in any problem solving or decision making process. These other pupils were solving another problem - how to adapt their two dimensional designs to the materials available.

nit for the name of a construction and they singled out of a for provide of naviar possibly two primary itantions. Doudolo's forking was one such piece, and they considered that this could calles play structure as well as being a rocking chain. Set also feelded that Wendel Castle's Highchair was more like as the higher and could be used as one.

At the end of the sequence the pupils, in teams, had produced a prototype chair design. The teams had changed from six to eight with one pupil making a solo attempt. Along with the actual three dimensional prototype the teams had also produced a series of studies or drawing of their design as documentation of the design process. Some teams had more studies done than others, this was due to the fact that some teams were quicker to complete tasks and start the next one. The slower teams were, in most cases, those with no previous art education.

Still, I remain confident that this sequence served to develop the pupils understanding, awareness and appreciation of functional design. It also served to reinforce my commitment to the development of design as a method of visual education in post-primary schools. Having completed my two design sequences, I can now proceed to support my belief with practical facts and results relating to the projects. (Samples of classroom work are illustrated at the end of the last chapter.)

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# FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 3

- Peter Gorb "Education for Capability" in <u>Education for</u> <u>Capability</u>, ed. Tyrell Burgess for Royal Society of Arts. (Berkshire: NFER-NELSON, 1986), p.112.
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- 8. John Fulton, "Design in Primary Education: The Name of the Game" in Ibid., p.84.
- 9. The Design Council, <u>Design Education at Secondary Level: a</u> <u>Design Council Report</u>, (London: The Design Council, 1991), p.3.
- 10. Tom Hudson, "Creative Technology" in <u>Issues in Design</u> <u>Education</u>, ed. Thistlewood, p.109.

#### FOUTHOTES CHARTER

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### CHAPTER 4

# EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

Looking back on the two Transition Year class sequences based on design projects I am more convinced than ever of the value and importance of Design Education in the school. Design requires no more nor no less equipment and material than any other aspect of Art and Craft. It involves the same amount of careful planning and preparation for each lesson.

With regard to Transition Year, I see design as the perfect vehicle of visual education. In both the Transition Year groups I was involved with, the minority who had previous artroom experience took to the challenge of design with eagerness and flair. The majority who had little or no previous art experience also felt challenged but were, in most cases, slower to transfer ideas from two-dimensions into three-dimensions and vice versa.

I tried not to emphasise a lot of two-dimensional drawing in the sequences for the obvious reason that the majority of the class would not, because they felt they could not, draw. However, I did introduce some line drawing as part and parcel of the project at various intervals throughout the sequences to try to break

# EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

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I have already stressed the opportunities which Transition Year offers in terms of Design education. The mere fact that the year is non-examination orientated releases both pupil and teacher from any commitment to a structured curriculum which is outside their control. The year can instead be centred on the pupil developing an understanding of himself and the world around him. As the <u>Transition Year Programme Guidelines 1994 - '95</u> states:

The Transition Year should offer pupils space to learn, mature and develop in the absence of examination pressure. The school should ensure therefore that, in all areas studied, there is a clear distinction between the Transition Year programme and the corresponding Leaving Certificate syllabus. (1)

The emphasis, with regard to design education, should be on developing an awareness, understanding and appreciation of design and that this development should be at the pupils personal pace and ability.

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The Transition Year should offer pupils space to thath, mature and develop in the abscure of transhiption pressure. The school should charge thete that, in all areas studied, thete, is a cick instinction between the Transition Year programs of the cortaspording Leaving Gerviliceds syliabus.

he empirears, with regard to design education anould be of a veloping an awareness, understanding and optic at the colon and chat this development should be at the pipel Within my sequences I made allowances for the weaker pupil, being careful to spot the quiet pupil "lost" among his teammates. Some pupils found the manipulation of materials very difficult. For these pupils I gave a combination of "easy-touse" materials (e.g. straws and lollipop sticks). There are no examinations and therefore no marks allotted to the completed project but instead a report on approach and interest taken in projects is compiled. Pupils, therefore, did not feel that they had failed if they never completed a team prototype but instead worked on perfecting a personal model and practising with various materials to achieve structure and form.

A negative aspect to Transition Year is their hectic timetable and, although the planning differs from school to school, this timetable can play havoc with the continuity of class sequence. Classes can be missed for over a month with projects halfcompleted, and when pupils return they forget what they were doing and so lose interest. However the beauty of teamwork is manifold. Teamwork alleviates the problem of lack of continuity, as a team will soon recall their plans and approach by a pooling of resources and notes. The design brief itself, is also a reminder. On re-reading the brief, and quickly reassessing the work done-to-date, the pupil soon becomes aware of what to do next.

Atomic connectances of multi allowaness derived and the availation that careful to aport the county proli "losi" among his scale asters. Some pupils round the mantpulation of materials on a contribute. For these subjust gave a combination of "espects use" materials (s.g. stravs and jolipon stutks). There are b craminations and therefore no marks allotted to the complete conject but instead a report on approach and interest the projects is complied. Pupils, therefore, did left for a sected of perfecting a personal model and practicing of acted of perfecting a personal model and practicing of sectors asterials to achieve approxime and form.

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Even designs which fail or fall short of the requirements of the design brief can still be beneficially analysed to see where, along the design process, an improvement or a correction should have been made. Pupils can work "backwards" through their approach to see where their design and the brief first started to deviate. Was it at the initial brainstorming stage? Was it after selection of design idea? Was it due to the manipulation of materials at prototype stage? By making time within the lesson plans for this type of analysis, the pupils will become familiar with the entire design process. This familiarity will increase their understanding and reduce the possibility of future designs not meeting the design briefs requirements.

The main design difference, apart from theme, between the initial and the second sequence was the fact that the prototype in the initial sequence was to actual size while in the second sequence the designs were scaled. This aspect of design is of crucial relevance to the artroom. In order for the pupils to

now Eve untide Bt a design in relation to industry in stringer-forward for the pupil. It either works to it does not obtain it either meets the requirements of the brief of it is net. The septhetic and originality qualities may be viewed erronal opinion but the black and white boundaries of substicial design give the pupil more control over velocities and apprediction processes of a design project

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e main design difference, epart from theme, between or file and the second sequence was the fact that the real to the initial sequence was to actual size while is the "polsience and castons were scaled. This aspect of design a

evaluate their prototype designs in terms of, does it or does it not work, the prototype designs should be to actual size. With the lamp designs the pupils worked the prototype to actual size - a light source could then be introduced to the prototype and the pupils could see if they were successful with regard to function. Unfortunately, as I have stated previously, the school restrictions imposed on me meant that the chairs were scaled prototypes. Nobody could judge the function by sitting on them. This led to errors in the proportions of the chair. Pupils were slower to see these "oversights", and found it harder to evaluate or judge their designs with regard to actual function. I consider this finding as the most important one relating to the implementation of design as a method of visual education in post-primary schools. Where possible, all designs should be for a practical purpose and all three dimensional prototype designs should be to actual size. This will maximise interest levels and minimise design oversights.

To conclude, I can see no reason why design, as a form of visual education, is not implemented throughout the entire post-primary school cycle. I have found it is the perfect means of visual education for the Transition Year pupils. Design challenges and stimulates the pupils and, at the same time, develops the pupils visual appreciation for the everyday world around them. Design meets with the general requirements and expectations for Transition Year. The ASTI state in <u>The Transition Year:</u>

A vit, the wrotecype designs should us to actual size with a light source could then be introduced to the protocype in a light source could then be introduced to the protocype in a publis could see if they were successful with result to accorpes. Abboly rould outge the that the chair were succepted on me meant that the chair were accorpes. Abboly rould outge the traction by mitting on the accorpes. Abboly rould outge the traction by mitting on the start to be these foversights' and found to here the is anytementation of design with require to actual for the set of independent that the chair fourth of the independent of design with require to actual for the independent of design with require to actual for the independent of design with require to actual for the independent of design with require the could be reactive of design as a method of visual education is intracted for actual three distributes and the reactive is the most important one restributes active the to actual size. This will designs should be a minimum design oversights.

Team teaching approaches that facilitate small group learning should also be considered. However, it is important to strike a balance between learning and the enjoyment that should be part of education for both teachers and students and not overburden everyone. (2)

With design and, in particular, teamwork design, much of the responsibility can fall on the team members to assess and progress with their design in accordance to a given brief.

The Department of Education states in <u>Transition Year</u> Programmes: Guidelines 1994 - '95:

A key feature of Transition Year should be the use of wide range of teaching / learning methodologies and situations. The goals and objectives of the programme can best be achieved by placing particular emphasis on:

- negotiated learning;
- personal responsibility in learning;
- activity-based learning;
- integration of appropriate areas of learning;
- team teaching approaches;
- groupwork: discussion, debate, interview, roleplay;
- project work and research; .... (3)

Design, introduced as part of the Transition Year's visual studies, can bring with it a whole new method and approach to learning that is pupil orientated and which meets the Department of Education's requirements. In saying that design is pupil orientated, I mean that the pupils have more control of and responsibility for their decisions. This in turn will promote the personal development of the pupils, and assist in an eventual smooth transition from pupil to adult life. rearming should also be considered to soverof is in the inputtant to strike a balance batween heaviling and the enjoyment that anould be part of souch on for boar to souch and students and not overburden everycor.

v design and, in particular, teaswork design, much of esponsibility can fall on the team members to espect our eas with their design in accordance to a given brief;

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A key feature of Transition Year abould be the use to well range of teaching / learning methodologies and atthat end The goals and objectives of the erogramme can key echieved by placing partiablar emphasis on negotisted learning;
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# FOOTNOTES : CHAPTER FOUR

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- 2. ASTI, The Transition Year, (Dublin: ASTI, 1993) P.13.
- 3. Department of Education, <u>Transition Year Programmes</u> <u>Guidelines 1994 - '95</u>, p.8.

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ASIL The Trensition Year, (Dublin, ASTI, 1993) F.

Department of Education, Transition, Near Programmer Guidelines 1994 - '95, p.8,
#### CHAPTER 5

## SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Before summing up my research and findings I must first reiterate a few facts as they stand today.

- 1994 sees the start of a new six-year cycle for all schools, which for many, means the introduction of a Transition Year Programme.
- There are no specific curriculum guidelines laid out for Transition Year regarding art education. It is up to each school to produce their own curriculum.
- Functional Design is not included on any present school curriculum.
- 4. Transition Year is about gaining new experiences not catered for in either Junior or Senior Cycle. It encourages self-development, responsibility and an awareness of the society in which they live.

Through my findings I have discovered the main challenges facing the art teacher involved with Transition Year. They are: SUDANA AND RECOMMENDA SAMAUS

ore summing up my research and innoings i must in the stand today.

1994 sees the start of a new six-year cycle reschools, which for many, means the introduction of Iransition Year Fregramme

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- Particularly where art is not an option, there is the possibility of a mixed ability class, with some pupils having no previous art experience.
- The Transition Year timetable has to allow for weeks for work experience and social work etc. and as a result effects the classroom continuity.
- The interdisciplinary nature of Transition Year often combines drama and music with art in a stage production.
- The non-examination orientated class which requires new methods of motivation.

My research has produced solutions to these challenges. Namely, with regard to a mixed ability group the introduction of functional design would prove "new" to all pupils. This will help to alleviate the feelings of inadequacy which non-artexperienced pupils may have. The Transition Year timetable has to include weeks away from school. As a result, artroom continuity can be disrupted. A design brief can help link classes together. Even after long breaks the pupil simply rereads the brief, assesses the project and decides what stage he/she is at and what to do next. ertievierie viere ant la not an oblient in there is the ossibility of a mixed ability class with some program having no previous art oxperience.

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Finally, there are no specific Department of Education guidelines for the art teacher with regard to the Transition Year programme. There is no examination orientated syllabus to be worked through. It is up to the individual school to produce their own visual education programme for Transition Year. I would again suggest, indeed, recommend, that art teachers look seriously at the opportunities and advantages of introducing the Transition Year pupil to Functional Design. It encourages selfmotivation through team competition (e.g. who can produce the best chair). In so doing it develops problem solving and decision making skills.

As I stated in the opening of my introduction - "the only constant is change". We, the educators of the young, must never settle for the habitual and familiar, we must seek new challenges and experiences for our pupils to equip them for their adult life. The Green Paper <u>Educating for a Changing</u> <u>World</u> states:

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The circumstances to which the Irish education system must adapt in the decade ahead include:

The need, particularly in an enterprise culture, to equip students with the ability to think and to solve problems - rather than just with an accumulation of knowledge. (1)

The Green Paper goes on to say:-

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When we look at the present Irish educational system in relation to these challenges, shortcomings immediately present themselves:-

The curriculum and exam system is strongly biased towards acquiring factual knowledge rather than developing critical thinking and problem solving skills. (2)

Design theory, practice and appreciation, particularly with regard to functional design, is the direction that visual education in Transition Year should take. It is the solution to the art teacher's problem of how to meet the challenges and requirement of this specific year. a set of the decade of the learn set of a set of the learn set of a set of the learn set of the set

the need, particularly in an enterprise durities is a equip students with the ability to think and to solve problems retner than just with an adamnular of knowledge. (1)

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1. Department of Education, <u>The Green Paper: Education for a</u> <u>changing world</u>, (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1992), p.3.

2. Ibid., p.4.

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SECOND SEQUENCE Chair Design

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Weeks Four - Seven





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